1:Opler E-5 (1931-1937)1941
(ca. 1870) NT8 Eastern Apache NT8
Chiricahua

After the craftsman has cut a branch, split it, and shaped and smoothed the wood, he lets it season. When it is dried to his liking, he "greases the wood and pulls it in every way until it is slick and shiny." The wood is bent over the knee or over a tree and tied. Then it is put in hot ashes and watched so that it will not burn. After it cools it keeps its shape. The bow wood is kept tied and allowed to dry for over ten days after this treatment with heat. When the double-curved bow is made, the heated bow wood is bent between two young trees growing close together.

The outer surface is usually painted a solid color; on the inner surface the maker puts a design by which his handiwork is known —a star, a cross, serrated lines, parallel lines, or a naturalistic figure. This may refer to his supernatural power or may be simply a decoration or an identification mark. The dyes used are vegetable or mineral substances made permanent by mixture with juice squeezed from heated yucca leaves. Though the bow is never backed longitudinally with lengths of sinew, it is often wrapped with sinew. Usually, however, this is not applied until the bow has been weakened by use. Horse hair is used, but less frequently, as the reinforcing agent.

When the bow is to be sinew wrapped, animal hooves and horns are boiled for two days, and the glue thus obtained is rubbed on the wood at the places where the sinew will cover it. Then the moistened sinew is wound around the bow, usually at the middle and at places on each side equidistant from the center. Glue is rubbed on the outer surface of the wrapping too, and the bow is left to dry. Occasionally, piñon pitch is substituted for glue. "The pitch is put on the sinew warm, and the bow is worked and bent back and forth to spread the pitch and work it in."

Sinew from the loin or the leg of the deer is saved for the bow string. The man soaks the sinew in water, separates it into strands, and rolls three of them together on his leg to form a string. The warrior or raider will have an extra string with him in case the one on his bow should snap. One informant claimed that the tough fiber from the mescal leaf, rolled on the thigh and